

debate.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Debate has ceased. Senator Beutler, would you like to close?

SENATOR BEUTLER: Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, just let me recap the basic argument that I am trying to make to you. What you have to decide is whether the economic benefits on the one hand are worth the increased danger on the highways on the other hand. And I have tried to show you that the economic benefit is very small and that the increased danger is great. For every fifteen to eighteen thousand dollar trailer unit that they are producing, the benefit to them is sixty to eighty dollars on their transportation costs. That is not much of a big deal. So in order to give them that little benefit, what are we doing to the average citizen of the State of Nebraska? We are putting triple trailers on the road. We are putting trucks on the road whose lethal accident rate is three times as high as passenger cars. Secondly, and I am not sure that you understood this, but you are putting other kinds of units on the highway. You are putting turnpike doubles on the highway. Look at the little chart I passed out to you. You are putting Rocky Mountain doubles on the highway, both more dangerous kinds of vehicles. And what has the Department of Roads told you outright with regard to Rocky Mountain doubles? That our highways are not designed for them, that they have to cross over into the other lane and go onto the shoulder of road in order to negotiate some of our interchanges. Now to me that doesn't make much sense at all that we would put something into a bill that would allow that. Furthermore, the bill is terribly drafted. The six-mile rule, I propose to you, that under the language of the six-mile rule that those trucks could proceed along a highway that was parallel to the interstates and not more than six miles from it for fifty, or sixty or a hundred miles as long as it was not more than six miles from the interstate. It is terribly drafted language. Maybe it wasn't the intent of the framers, I don't know. But it is terribly drafted language because it would allow that sort of thing and because it would allow it right in the middle of the City of Omaha or the City of Lincoln. Those, I